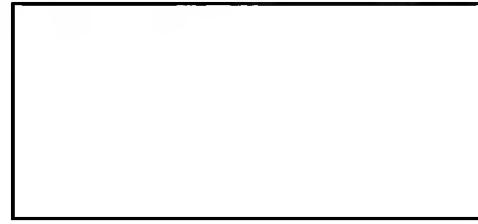


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NATO: Prospects for further intra-European defense cooperation. [redacted] (Page 4)

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NATO: THE EUROPEAN ALLIES ARE MOVING AHEAD WITH INTRA-EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION IN SPITE OF THE STILL-NEGATIVE FRENCH POSITION.

LAST WEEK THE MEMBERS OF THE EUROGROUP--THE EUROPEAN MEMBERS OF NATO MINUS FRANCE, ICELAND, AND PORTUGAL--ANNOUNCED AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE TO CO-OPERATE IN ARMS DEVELOPMENT AND PROCUREMENT. CO-OPERATION IN THIS AREA WOULD BE THE MOST AMBITIOUS UNDERTAKING OF THE GROUP, WHICH TO DATE HAS INITIATED JOINT TRAINING PROGRAMS AND STUDIES OF VARIOUS DEFENSE IMPROVEMENTS. IN THE PAST, CONFLICTING INDUSTRIAL AND NATIONAL INTERESTS HAVE SERIOUSLY HAMPERED EUROPEAN MULTILATERAL WEAPONS PROJECTS, SUCH AS THE MULTI-ROLE COMBAT AIRCRAFT. BUT THE IMPORTANCE THE WEST GERMANS, IN PARTICULAR, ATTACH TO THE EUROGROUP MAY PROVIDE THE NECESSARY MOMENTUM FOR THE NEW PROJECT.

BONN REPORTEDLY HOPES THAT THE EUROGROUP WILL ENHANCE THE EUROPEAN ROLE IN NATO AND, OVER THE LONG RUN, EVOLVE INTO A EUROPEAN DEFENSE ORGANIZATION TO COMPLEMENT ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL INTEGRATION IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY.

THE EUROGROUP MEMBERS AT THEIR MEETING LAST WEEK REJECTED FOR THE TIME BEING ANY SPECIAL APPROACH TO ENTICE THE FRENCH. THE MEMBERS RECOGNIZE THAT SO

LONG AS DEFENSE MINISTER DEBRE REMAINS A POWERFUL FIGURE IN PARIS, THE FRENCH WILL PROBABLY NOT GO BEYOND THEIR CURRENT ROLE AS OBSERVER ON ONE OF THE GROUP'S WORKING COMMITTEES. THEY THEREFORE INTEND TO CONCENTRATE ON DEVELOPING THE GROUP'S PROGRAMS, HOPING THAT THEY WILL APPEAR ATTRACTIVE TO PARIS AT SOME POINT IN THE FUTURE.

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